



The SPARK GAP

147.375  T-110.9  444.350

Volume 1 Number 12

December 2004

IN THIS ISSUE

CVARC Meeting Minutes	Boat Anchor Dock
Next Club Meeting	Ask Elmer ??
Club Happenings	Technical Tidbits
Amateur Related News Bites	
Area Hamfest Activities	
Contest Buzz	

November 6, 2004

Joseph Jachimiec - W7KXD (SK)

Joseph J. Jachimiec, 66, of Chippewa Falls died of a stroke on Saturday, November 6, 2004, at Luther Hospital, Eau Claire, in the arms of his family.

He was born March 25, 1938, in Chicago, Ill., the son of Joseph B. and Cecilia (Strojny) Jachimiec. He married Epifania Calo on October 12, 1968, in Chicago. He was a resident of Chippewa Falls for 25 years.

Joseph was also a ham radio operator, originally licensed as W9ZEX in the mid-1950s. His call sign in Wisconsin was W7KXD. He was a member of the Chippewa Valley Amateur Radio Club (CVARC) and Lifetime member of the American Radio Relay League.

PRESIDENTS CORNER

by Gale, WD9HFT

I would like to thank all the club members for making this a very good year for the CVARC. Your participation and work has helped our club grow very rapidly. I hope that you will continue your involvement in the coming year. With members that enjoy learning and doing it makes the job of President a real treat. Thank you all and I hope everyone has a great Christmas and a most Happy New Year.

CVARC MEETING MINUTES

by Ron, W9RJW

The November meeting had a very good turnout and a fun time was had by all. The club Bylaws were approved and will be posted to the site soon. The club also voted to not pursue a Xmas Party this year. No input for this topic was received via email following a 2 month posting on the club website. Members were reminded to be thinking about the upcoming club elections and if they are interested in running for a position to contact the club officers so as to be placed on the ballot. A discussion

about the possibility of a traveling "Ham Shack" review was discussed. Members would travel between 2-3 members ham shacks to review their gear and setups. This would be much like the mobile antenna clinic. The

emphasis is to show the different ways gear can be organized and to answer any questions. This will be discussed more in the upcoming meetings.

NEXT CLUB MEETING

The next club meeting will be announced on the web site. No date was set for December – the normal date is the ECARC Xmas Party and most members indicated they would be attending that function. Most members maintain a dual membership in both clubs.

CLUB HAPPENINGS

I hope that each club member has enjoyed reading each issue of the Spark Gap as much as I have had in writing it. I have continued to try and bring in Amateur Radio related items that appeal to all. Please continue to submit your suggestions for articles and stories. I would like to wish each and every member a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. – John, W9SWL (Editor)

The CVARC now has 34 members. The club Application for Membership and Interest Sheet are both posted on the web for download.

AMATEUR RELATED NEWS BITES

by John, W9SWL

EXPERIMENTAL LICENSEES MOVING LOW-FREQUENCY AGENDA FORWARD

With no Amateur Radio low-frequency allocation in North America, stations operating under FCC Part 5 Experimental licenses <https://gulfoss2.fcc.gov/prod/oet/cf/els/index.cfm> in the US or under special experimental authorizations in Canada nonetheless continue to research the nether regions of the radio spectrum. By and large, LF experimentation is occurring in the vicinity of 136 kHz--typically 135.7 to 137.8 kHz--where amateur allocations already exist elsewhere in the world. The FCC rejected the ARRL's 1998 petition for LF allocations at 135.7 to 137.8 kHz and 160 to 190 kHz, however, after electric utilities objected that ham radio transmissions might interfere with power line carrier (PLC) signals used to control the power grid.

"Most of the new LF activity of Part 5 licensees has been in the shared 137 kHz amateur allocation available in some parts of the world," says low-frequency experimenter Laurence Howell, KL1X/5. "Although not in the Amateur Radio Service, these Part 5 experimental

stations continue to add to our knowledge on propagation and engineering."

The holder of Part 5 Experimental license WD2XDW, Howell--who's also GM4DMA--previously operated LF from Alaska. He's since relocated to Oklahoma, and has now resumed his LF work on 137.7752 and 137.7756 kHz. Already he's reporting some spectacular success, despite antenna limitations. On October 28, New Zealand LFER Mike McAleve, ZL4OL, copied WD2XDW's 137 kHz carrier "bursts" over a path of more than 13,000 km (8000 miles).

Howell believes the reception probably marked the first transpacific reception of a US-generated signal. "The land mass between Oklahoma and the ocean was considered to be a large obstacle to long-range communications," Howell remarked, "but obviously not."

The next day, Jim Moritz, M0BMU, copied the LF signals of three North American in the vicinity of 137 kHz (137.777 kHz)--including Howell's WD2XDW and WD2XES, operated by John Andrews, W1TAG, in Massachusetts--using Argo software, which can detect signals not otherwise readable. The third station, Joe Craig, VO1NA, in Newfoundland, has been operating a beacon on 137 kHz. Howell says, VO1NA's signals serve as a bellwether of LF transatlantic propagation. LF signals of European amateurs likewise are heard in North America.

On November 12, Andrews and another LF experimenter in Massachusetts completed the first two-way data exchange between Part 5 Experimental license stations on 137 kHz. Andrews worked Warren Ziegler, K2ORS, operating as WD2XGJ in Wayland, using conventional CW. The stations are about 25 miles apart, and both used loop antennas for transmitting. Jay Rusgrove, W1VD, some 100 miles to the south in Connecticut, monitored and recorded the QSO.

In British Columbia, Lorne Tilley, VE7TIL, and Steve McDonald, VE7SL, have been heard throughout North America on LF. Howell says both are starting a formal study of variances in groundwave propagation.

Howell says the disturbed solar conditions earlier this month wiped out long-haul paths through or close to the auroral oval during nighttime hours--especially at higher latitudes. He notes, however, that daytime signals over paths of between 1000 and 1500 km (620 and 930 miles) showed increased signal strengths during the disturbances. Howell has more LF information on his Web site <http://myweb.cableone.net/flow>.

AREA HAMFEST ACTIVITIES

by John, W9SWL

None this month – save your money for Christmas

CONTEST BUZZ

by John, W9SWL

ARRL Contest Calendar can be found here:

<http://www.arri.org/contests/calendar.html> a more complete list follows. December 2004:

ARCI Topband Sprint	0000Z-0600Z, Dec 2 2200Z, Dec 3 to 1600Z, Dec 5
ARRL 160-Meter Contest	0000Z-2400Z, Dec 4
TARA RTTY Melee	0400Z-0600Z, Dec 4
Wake-Up! QRP Sprint	0000Z-2400Z, Dec 5
CIS DX Contest, CW	2000Z-2400Z, Dec 5
ARCI Holiday Spirits	0200Z-0400Z, Dec 7
Homebrew Sprint	0000Z, Dec 11 to 2400Z, Dec 12
ARS Spartan Sprint	0000Z, Dec 11 to 0700Z, Dec 15
ARRL 10-Meter Contest	0200Z-0359Z, Dec 11
Fall NA Meteor Scatter Rally	2100Z-2300Z, Dec 17
Great Colorado Snowshoe Run	0000Z, Dec 18 to 2400Z, Dec 19
Russian 160-Meter Contest	0000Z-2400Z, Dec 18
MDXA PSK DeathMatch	0000Z-2400Z, Dec 18
OK DX RTTY Contest	1400Z, Dec 18 to 1400Z, Dec 19
RAC Winter Contest	1500Z, Dec 18 to 1500Z, Dec 19
Croatian CW Contest	1600Z, Dec 18 to 1600Z, Dec 19
Stew Perry Topband Challenge	0200Z-0959Z, Dec 26
International Naval Contest	0830Z-1059Z, Dec 26
RAEM Contest	
DARC Christmas Contest	

BOAT ANCHOR DOCK

by John, W9SWL

The boat and anchor are Ice Bound.

TECHNICAL TIDBITS

by John, W9SWL

What is - milli, micro, nano, pico?

1 mili Farad (or any other unit) is 1/1,000th or .001 times the unit. (10-3)

1 micro = 1/1,000,000 or 0.000 001 times the unit (10-6)

1 nano = 1/1,000,000,000 or 0.000 000 001 times the unit (10-9)

1 pico = 1/1,000,000,000,000 or 0.000 000 000 001 times the unit (10-12)

ASK ELMER ??

by John, W9SWL

Are there any CW nets I can monitor? Starting with the Novice Net on 3723 KHz. at 6 p.m., or the Slow Speed Net on 3645 KHz. at 6:30, operators check their CW fists just to be sure they're still operational. Speeds

from 5 to 8 w.p.m. aren't beyond reach, and every NCS has been instructed to slow down to the speed of the station checking in. At 7:00 p.m. and again at 10:00, WIN meets to handle traffic at slightly higher speeds. Each net is very efficient. Abbreviations speed things up. Typically, our CW nets last around ten minutes to maintain an important part of the National Traffic System. Join the fun. CU on CW. – K9LGU

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year to All

CVARC OFFICERS

President – Gale Sorum (WD9HFT)
Vice President – John Balow (KB9VCO)
Secretary – Ron Krueger (W9JRW)
Treasurer – Ron Anderson (W9RMA)
Past President – John Ingersoll (W9SWL)

Mailing Address:

Secretary - CVARC
18310 79th Ave
Chippewa Falls WI 54729

Web: <http://www.w9cva.org/>

Email: info@w9cva.org